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## COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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LANCE M. LARSON  
Director of Legislative Affairs

March 11, 2010

The Honorable Paul Cook  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 5164  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **AB 1906 (Cook)** . As introduced 2/17/2010 . **SPONSOR**

Dear Assemblyman Cook:

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors is pleased to sponsor AB 1906. As you are aware, each county in California is constitutionally required to have at least one grand jury impaneled at all times. The major functions of county grand juries are divided into criminal indictments and civil investigations. The grand jury plays an integral role in county government, providing autonomous oversight over governmental operations.

In San Bernardino County, the same panel executes both criminal and civil functions. The grand jury is charged and sworn to investigate or inquire into county matters of civil concern, such as the needs of county officers, including the abolition or creation of offices, purchases, leases, or changes in the method or system of performing the duties of the agencies subject to investigation, focusing on governmental oversight, ensuring the county is governed honestly and efficiently, and county monies are appropriated properly. In San Bernardino County the civil investigation portion consumes the majority of juror time.

The grand jury is charged with the distinguished and arduous role of ~~%~~watchdog+of public office, with the potential to uncover substantive opportunities for improvements in public operations each year. Grand jury responsibilities associated with overseeing San Bernardino County, the largest geographical county, with 18,000 employees and two million residents, is difficult under current conditions. Foremen of recent grand juries have described their involvedness as ~~%~~impossible to do a thorough investigation of this massive operation,+~~%~~laborious and exhaustive+and requiring time spent during ~~%~~evenings and off-days.+

AB 1906 would allow for the impanelment of up to two additional grand juries, augmenting necessary and independent governmental oversight over county operations, allowing for more thorough investigations, exposing opportunities for the betterment of public service and alleviating the burden of grand jury service. For these reasons, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors is pleased to sponsor AB 1906. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Lance Larson, County Director of Legislative Affairs at (909) 387-4821. The Board thanks you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

**Paul Biane**  
San Bernardino County Second District Supervisor